



## **CCD Technology and Telecommunications Task Force Annual Report for 2013**

### REVIEW OF 2013 ACTIVITIES

Over 2013, the task force was very active and met every month discussing topics of interest and actions the task force should take. The first part of the year was spent working to meet with Congressional offices, working with the Education CCD Task Force on issues pertaining to PARCC and SBAC, drafting support letters for specific pieces of legislation and partnering with other organizations to support such legislation.

The task force also weighed in on funding issues that impact resources for assistive technology, specifically the Assistive Technology (AT) Act. The task force drafted several letters to the House and the Senate pertaining to FY2014 funding and also tracked impacts of sequestration.

Also, the task force coordinated a successful AT Capitol Hill briefing that welcomed over 80 congressional staffers and stakeholders from the disability community. The six-person panel hosted a robust discussion of how assistive technology impacts people with disabilities as they access educational services, seek employment, participate in recreational activities and maintain their life in their community. Additionally, the briefing provided a segment where attendees could interact with assistive technology and understand the value it adds to the life of a person with a disability. In preparation for this briefing, the task force assembled substantive materials that outlined legislative suggestions for marquee pieces of legislation such as ESEA and the HEA. Additionally, the task force drafted a one-pager explaining Section 508 for staff. Also, the task force provided staff the task force's core set of principles. The briefing, hosted in collaboration with the House Disability Caucus, is something the task force would like to continue in the future.

### 2014 OBJECTIVES

Over the past two years, the task force has made significant progress in elevating the profile and importance of assistive technology on Capitol Hill but more work needs to be accomplished and the current work must be continued. While 2014 is an election year and will bring much transition, the task force will work to foster relations with new champions of assistive technology. With the anticipated loss of Senator Harkin, we plan to work as a

team to develop and nurture other members of Congress' interest in assistive technology.

We plan to continue to push for full funding for the Assistive Technology Act. We also plan to continue encouraging members to co-sponsor and pass the Technology, Equality and Accessibility in College and Higher Education (TEACH) Act; the Ensuring Access to Quality Complex Rehabilitation Technology Act; and the Medicare Demonstration of Coverage for Low Vision Devices Act of 2013.

We also plan to monitor accessibility of all aspects of the Federal government to people with disabilities, advocate for legislative language in moving pieces of legislation that support and highlight the important role of assistive technology.

The task force also aims to submit more testimony to House and Senate hearings, more responses to regulations and be more active in CCD social media and communications efforts.

Finally, we plan to hold routine successful briefings, as we did in 2013, as appropriate and feasible.

We look forward to a busy year and encourage more members of CCD to join our task force.

CO-CHAIRS IN 2013:

Audrey Busch - Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP)

Eric Buehlmann - National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)

Mark Richert - American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)

Theresa Morgan - Perkins